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This issue of the *Journal of Environmental Policy and Planning* presents eight papers that, while spanning a broad geographical and topical range, coincidentally assemble around two core themes: the discursive construction of environmental issues and the governance arrangements addressing them. While all papers find that local and national context matters, some overarching patterns clearly emerge: In the cases analysed here, environmental issues are consistently linked to economic and growth agendas with higher priority to mobilise resources and support. Environmental governance arrangements are not just highly complex and usually entangled in multi-level and multi-arena constellations, but need to be constantly negotiated and adjusted to adapt to a wide array of interests and concerns. Successful environmental policy requires strategic exploitation of discursive and political opportunities, and connection to other agendas with higher priority in the relevant constituencies.

Four papers address governance arrangements. First, Heleen Mees compares local governance arrangements for three areas of pro-active climate adaptation: green roofs for storm water surges, adaptive building for water safety and health-care measures for heat prevention. Based on her 20 European and North American cases, she finds that public sector responsibilities dominate in the stages of planning, implementation and evaluation, while private actors have mostly secondary responsibilities in implementation, evaluation and maintenance. Allowing for the importance of national administrative traditions, Mees attributes the dominance of public sector responsibilities to market failure, legal duties and the lack of knowledge and urgency among many private actors.

Jarmo Kortelainen and Teijo Rytteri use a policy mobility framework to analyse the translation of the EU's renewable energy directive into policy in Finland. Their detailed case study shows that the directive contains few 'hard' and several 'soft' governance elements and creates an 'empty governance space' that can be filled by national policy-makers and stakeholders. The 'filling in practices' are shaped by institutional path dependency and domestic policy and administrative routines. However, new actors and institutions can be enrolled to introduce novel policy elements, often resulting in layering of old and new policies.

Franziska Wolff, Norma Schönherr and Dirk Arne Heyen compare six national cases of sustainable consumption instruments across the EU in the areas of housing and food. They find regulatory and economic instruments to be more effective in fostering sustainable consumption practices than voluntary and procedural instruments. Important success factors are ambitious goals, joint targeting of consumer behaviour and the framework systems of provision, accommodation of consumer needs and practices, favourable market conditions, synergies with other policies and stakeholder involvement, which, however, tends to be dominated by industry. Overall, 'a combination of environmental with other benefits offers improved prospects for instrument success'.

Björn Hassler analyses whether and how the implementation of the Baltic Sea Action Plan, an international treaty among all its riparian states, helped to address environmental collective action problems. While collective action theory can predict some domestic drivers and priorities, an inductive thematic analysis of the national implementation documents reveals specific drivers and incentives, domestic and external constraints which could be summarised in distinctive country profiles. Hassler concludes that 'diverging domestic conditions [...] may obstruct mutually beneficial outcomes' even if 'the design of transnational environmental agreements has become increasingly sophisticated'.

The other four papers address the discursive construction of issues in environmental policy and planning. Håvard Haarstad deploys document analysis and case studies to find a multi-layered picture how sustainability is constructed in the 'smart city' discourse. EU-level documents highlight innovation and competitiveness and

assume sustainability to result from more efficient urban systems and greater data availability. The first six smart city pilot projects are strongly ICT-driven or use ICT components to present relatively traditional interventions as innovative. The in-depth case study of Stavanger shows that the smartness discourse is linked to specific regional development agendas. Overall, the smartness discourse articulates faith in the sustainability potential of technological solutions, creates political opportunities for sustainability interventions and opens up urban governance arrangements, enabling 'a dialogue on what it means and should mean to live in a sustainable city'.

No less than three papers apply interpretive methods to various aspects of renewable energy policy. Kirsty L. Holstead, Carlos Galán-Díaz and Lee-Ann Sutherland analyse the discursive construction of on-farm wind energy in the UK farming press between 1980 and 2013. Based on an in-depth analysis of 218 articles, they find a dominant 'all systems go' discourse that presents on-farm wind energy as business opportunity for farmers. This is counterbalanced by 'proceed with caution' and 'conflict' discourses. In contrast, green energy and rural development discourses are much less salient. Overall, the farm press 'accentuate and perpetuate a hegemonic economic rationality' that 'encourages an instrumental approach', while stereotyping opponents, delegitimising objectors, presenting farmers as representatives of the countryside and obscuring economic power structures in the wind industry.

Focusing on local opposition against high-voltage grids, Øystein Aas, Marte Qvenild, Line Camilla Wold, Gerd Blindheim Jacobsen and Audun Ruud present two case studies from Norway to demonstrate how public agencies' discretion to base decisions on own judgment can create 'policy trolls', that is, boundary objects that fit into mutually exclusive categories such as knowledge versus ignorance. They demonstrate how agencies adopt strategies of troll 'exorcism', adaptation or assimilation to reduce, adjust or address uncertainty. In response, objecting citizens and stakeholders adopt strategies of troll detection and 'bewitching' to expose and amplify ambiguity. Whether scientific uncertainty results in policy trolls and the ensuing distrust and conflict depends not least on issue articulation by the regulatory agencies.

Last but not least, Emmanuel Songsore and Michael Buzzelli present a methodological framework for the use of qualitative and quantitative content analysis to study renewable energy developments, the related political processes and policy outcomes. Focusing on stakeholder conflicts around wind energy development, the authors provide detailed guidance to identify frames through qualitative and quantitative content analysis, to detect key areas of conflict among stakeholders and to link these to different public responses to risk, following Beck's and Giddens' risk society theory. The paper provides a detailed discussion of methodological framework for a more holistic understanding of stakeholder conflicts around renewable energy.

Overall, the contributions in this issue demonstrate the usefulness and necessity of social science theory to understand the context- and issue-specific nature of environmental policy and planning, and how local contexts and issues are linked to overarching patterns of environmental discourse and governance. The contributions also show that environmental issues are closely linked to broader issues of societal and economic development. They therefore contribute to social science more generally and improve our understanding of contemporary societies as closely interwoven with environmental issues throughout.